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844 The midwife who attends the pregnant woman at the end of the seventh moon also attends the birth, for which she receives payment in the form of a pig. No gongs are sounded at birth, but if the child is a boy a conch-shell trumpet is blown. If the boy is the father's eldest son, the blowing of the conch-shell is the signal for the entire village to raid the father's enclosure. This will be described below in the section dealing with the "Eldest Son."[1] I have no record of special rites or beliefs [845] concerning twins.[2]

846 After delivery, a number of women called *nain ghore*[3] sleep in the Lodge for a period of either five, ten or twenty days, being paid at the end of this time with money-mats varying in number with the length of their stay, and with a festive pudding with fowls in it.

I have unfortunately no details regarding delivery or the disposal of the afterbirth.[4] There are two methods of disposal of the stump of the umbilical cord (*biton*) when it withers away from the child's body. Both methods are applicable to a child of either sex, and the choice of method lies with the father. The stump must in either case be eventually placed in a *na-lil* shell, which is then deposited in a hole in the reef. If the father wishes his child to be a great shell-seeker he will tell the mother to dispose of the cord by depositing it in a *na-lil* shell in a hole in the reef. This she does on the Tenth Day after birth, when, as will be seen below, she goes to wash and throw away the leaves with which the child's excrement has been wiped up. If, on the other hand, he is afraid of the child developing a habit of hanging around the reef looking for shellfish instead of going to work in the gardens on the mainland, he will himself take charge of the stump by placing it in his ear, where by reason of its toughness it may remain for three or four years before he deposits it, as in the first case, in a *na-lil* shell in a hole in the reef.[5]

[1] See p. 180.

[2] Twins of either sex are called *na-lav*. In the brief genealogy given in Table X there are two pairs of twins, both in the same family. The first pair consisted of two Pete-hul boys, Mal-mari and Bahor (whose other name was Melteg-bimbihi). Both grew up and married and had children. When Mal-mari died, his wife Le-mbagho (of Peter-ihl) and their son Ni-al-sul went to live with his twin brother Bahor. This man Bahor in turn married Le-nimal (of Tolamp) by whom he also had twins, a boy and a girl. The boy was called Saki and the girl by the same name with the usual feminine prefix, namely Le-saki. Both these lived for about a year but then fell sick and died. In this case the tendency to generate twins seems to run in the male line, though there is not enough evidence to show whether this is a typical case.

[3] I do not know the meaning of this phrase. *Ghore* means "open" or "out."

[4] In Seniang it is buried in a hole in the house, and a fire lighted over this, over which the child is rocked to and fro that its body may be hot (Deacon, 4, p. 235). In Lambumbu it is left for five days and then buried outside (Deacon, 4, p. 238). The Banks Islands custom resembles that of Seniang, the afterbirth there being looked on as part of the child, even after it is born (see Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 144).

[5] For treatment of the umbilical cord in Seniang, Mewun and Lambumbu see Deacon, 4, pp. 225-38.

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"Right of inspection" exercised by the child's maternal kin. Father and mother's brother pray for the well-being of the child.

According to Godefroy, immediately after the birth the husband's house is invaded by his wife's family, consisting of the child's mother's brother and her parents, to exercise the "right of inspection" over both mother and child in accordance with the rules of the matrilineal system. The father's brothers and their sons are not entirely excluded, since they too share the "right of inspection," though in a lesser degree and must exercise it with discretion.

If the child is a boy, and only then, a special rite occurs on the day after birth, in which the mother's brother takes a leading part. The father presents a fowl to the mother's brother, who takes it to his own Lodge, where it is cooked in a pudding. Then all the members of his Lodge together hold a feast of communion (*ghete-ghati*) with the ancestors, during which they recite a prayer. This prayer begins with the phrase "*Tamat wurogh*," which is the customary opening on all similar occasions. The word *tamat* means both "ghost" and "peace," and *wurogh* "to be quiet." The invocation may therefore be translated "Ancestors, peace, be quiet," meaning "Do not molest us, but listen to our prayer." This is then followed by a specific petition, which on this occasion begins "Here is a new child born to us," and goes on to ask the ancestors to look after it and let it grow up to be "first a youth (*malakel*) and in due time an honoured old man (*na-humbe*)." [1]

On the same or the next day, the mother's brother in return takes a fowl to the child's father, who cooks it in his Lodge, and in a similar manner, with the members of his Lodge, makes communion with his ancestors, begging them to let the boy grow up and become a *malakel* and then a *na-humbe*.

Fifth Day

(*a*) *Naming the child.*

The Fifth Day (*bong e-lim*) after birth is an important one, for on this day the child, whether boy or girl, receives its name, and the mother's brother his tribute of pigs. On the morning of this day the child is laid

[1] This is the set formula. The ancestors are never asked to make the child into a *mer-tsan* (see p. 529), the oldest age-grade of all, since this term is a purely descriptive one and does not carry the religious connotation connected with *na-humbe* (see also p. 529).

For other instance of the use of the invocation *tamat wurogh* see p. 557. The phrase is used throughout the Small Islands.

Instances of similar prayers offered by the wife's brother to her deceased father (or father's father) in Lagalag and to her deceased mother or father's mother in Lambumbu are given by Deacon (4, pp. 237-8), though in this case they are offered during the seventh and eighth months of pregnancy and the object of the prayer is the safety not of the as yet unborn child but of the mother. The brother so praying is rewarded for his good offices by payment of a pig. The communion rite includes the cooking of a fowl and exchange visits between the wife's brother and the father as on Vao.